

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CU-02 AF-06 ARA-06 EA-06 NEA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 689

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 5751

PARIS FOR UNESCO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AORG, PORG, UNESCO, VT

SUBJECT: VATICAN VIEWS ON UNESCO

REF: STATE 080985; ROME 16707, DEC 2, 1974

WE HAD OPPORTUNITY APRIL 17 TO DISCUSS WITH ARCHBISHOP GIOVANNI BENELLI, VATICAN DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE, USG'S PREOCCUPATIONS OVER UNESCO'S FUTURE, PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OF INCREASING POLITICIZING OF ORGANIZATION. WE ALSO MENTIONED POSSIBILITY THAT TUNISIA MAY SEEK TO CO-SPONSOR AT MAY 5 EXBD MEETING AN ITEM TO GRANT PLO PERMANENT OBSERVER STATUS AT UNESCO HEADQUARTERS. BENELLI SAID POPE PAUL AND HOLY SEA SHARE USG CONCERN OVER POLITICIZING OF UNESCO WHICH THEY CONSIDER MOST EFFECTIVE OF UN SPECIALIZED AGENCIES. BENELLI NOTED THAT UNESCO DIRECTOR GENERAL, WHO HAD PAPAL AUDIENCE LAST WEEK, INFORMED VATICAN THAT HE LIKEWISE UNHAPPY OVER LATEST TREND IN ORGANIZATION AND WAS HOPING THAT THERE COULD BE COOLING-OFF PERIOD FOLLOWING LAST DECEMBER'S DECISION TO BAR ISRAEL FROM PARTICIPATION IN EUROPEAN GROUP. AT CLOSE OF CONVERSATION, BENELLI ASSURED US HE WOULD GIVE SERIOUS THOUGHT TO WHAT HOLY SEA MIGHT DO TO DISCOURAGE UNESCO MEMBERS FROM DRIVING ORGANIZATION INTO POSITION WHICH MAY SERIOUSLY HAMPER CARRYING OUT ITS MISSION. IN THIS
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REGARD, HE MENTIONED POSSIBILITY OF INSTRUCTING HOLY SEA'S

PERMANENT OBSERVER AT UNESCO, MSGR. CONTI, TO DISCUSS PROBLEM
WITH HIS COLLEAGUES IN PARIS.BEAUDRY

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